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Alaskan Education Commissioner, Roger Sampson, Named President of 50-State Compact for Education

DENVER – Kansas Governor Kathleen Sebelius, chair of the Education Commission of the States (ECS), announced that Roger Sampson, Alaska Commissioner of Education and Early Development, has been selected as president of ECS.

“The competitiveness and strength of the American economy is tied directly to the quality of our workforce. Public education is critical to building a state’s workforce and providing every child a chance to succeed,” Sebelius said. “An investment in schools is an investment in the future. Roger’s skills and background make him uniquely suited to lead ECS with a new focus, invigorated purpose, and fresh start.”

Sampson will take over the presidency from Roderick G.W. Chu who has served with distinction as interim president while a national search for a permanent president took place.

“Rod guided ECS through a challenging time. He has done an amazing job leading ECS through this transition, and we are grateful for his leading us to this point. Our extensive, nationwide search for the right leader introduced us to incredible candidates from around the country,” said Wisconsin State Senator Luther Olsen, who steered the search committee. “Roger’s experience, vision, and accountability exceeded expectations.”

Sampson will officially accept the presidency during The National Forum on Education Policy, ECS’ annual conference, to be held in Philadelphia July 10-13th.

“I see a future for ECS in which relationships with legislatures, foundations and educators are strengthened through our service to them,” said Sampson. “We have an opportunity to support these groups through our ability to build a consensus and achieve common goals, while meeting the individual needs of each state.

“I’m excited about highlighting the existing strengths within the organization while incorporating new ideas and a revitalized team. America must compete on a global level; developing and implementing an effective policy will be a critical component for the American education system to meet this challenge.”

An accomplished leader on student achievement, fiscal discipline, and school improvement, Sampson:

- Led the Chugach School District to become the first district in history to receive the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award
- Raised student standardized test scores from 33% to 76% in four years
- Currently serves as the Alaska Commissioner of Education and Early Development
- Was named National Rural Superintendent of the Year in 1997 and Alaska Principal of the Year in 1987
- Managed $1.5 billion in state and federal grants
- Reduced teacher turnover by 40% in two years.

The Education Commission of the States (ECS) is an interstate compact created by the states, territories and the U.S. Congress that helps governors, legislators, state education officials and others identify, develop and implement public policies to improve student learning at all levels. A nonpartisan organization, ECS was formed in 1965 and is located in Denver, Colorado.

Helping State Leaders Shape Education Policy